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SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: SADR EXTENDS JAM FREEZE INDEFINITELY

REF: A. BAGHDAD 2552 (MORE ON MUQTADA AL-SADR'S  
MUMAHIDOON)  
[B](#). BAGHDAD 2448 (JIHAD OF THOUGHTS)  
[C](#). BAGHDAD 2488 (SADR'S STEAMROLLERS)

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Brian Shukan for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

[1](#). (SBU) "The freeze on the activities of the al-Mahdi army...shall continue to be in effect for an indefinite period of time," said Muqtada al-Sadr in a hand-written statement released on August 26. In the statement Sadr emphasized the importance of obeying the program of "Al-Muhmahidoon," the newly-established cultural and social organization formed from the majority of Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) followers. He also called for weekly protests against the "occupation" during the month of Ramadan.

[2](#). (C) A formal extension of the year-old freeze on JAM activity was widely expected and is consistent with recent Sadr statements on the transformation of JAM into an unarmed social movement dedicated to the "jihad of thought." Sadrists preachers are adjusting their messages accordingly. In his August 29 sermon in Kufa, Sadrists Sheikh Abdel Hadi al-Mahmidawi warned of the corrupting influence of "entertainment and leisure programs and soap operas" broadcast during Ramadan.

[3](#). (SBU) An August 30 article in Al-Sharq al-Awsat illustrated the challenge Sadrists leaders will face in convincing their wayward flock to abandon their guns in favor of intellectual resistance. The article quoted Adnan Habib, 22, as saying "Although I would prefer to fight, I will follow the orders of Muqtada al-Sadr." Mohammed Mousi, 18, added "I prefer resistance with weapons, because it is the only thing I can do."  
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